

are detachably connected to the chassis, i.e., the shafts and the wheels as a unit are removed from the chassis (see Fig. 12).

In contrast to this, the cited reference U.S. 6,502,656 has wheels that are detachably connected to the respective shafts or axles 42'. This is disclosed in col. 5, lines 23ff, and shown in Fig. 1A. Col. 5, lines 23-39, discloses different types of wheels 20, 120, 220, 320, 420, and different possibilities of attaching the wheels to the axles (snap-fit; friction-fit, press-fit etc) are disclosed. In any case the point is made that the wheels are detachably mounted on the driven axles or shafts 42'. The shafts 42' are fixed parts of the drive assembly 48 and are thus fixedly mounted within the container. This is shown in Fig. 1A as well as in Fig. 3. The shafts 42' are NOT detachably from the chassis. The shafts 42' are not provided on the rear wheels; to the contrary, the wheels are explicitly detachably mounted on the shafts 42' in order to allow the exchange in accordance with the terrain (see col. 5, line 53, to col. 6, line 38). The different types of wheels are shown in Figs. 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E; they improve travelling on different ground surfaces (grass, gravel, sandy surfaces). The container lid is specifically designed to hold the different sets of wheels (see Fig. 4).

The disclosed mobilized container is therefore specifically designed such that the **wheels** are detachable from the halfshafts of the drive unit so that the mobilized container can be used optimally on different ground surfaces. The reference does not show halfshafts that are detachable from the chassis; the shafts 42' are fixed components of the drive assembly (see Figs. 1A and 3). A detachment of the shafts 42' from the drive assembly is not proposed or suggested.

The only alternative mentioned in this reference in regard to preventing projecting parts in case of airline travel is to shorten the shaft 42' so as not to protrude from the container and to prolong the hub of the wheels appropriately so as to be able to engage the shafts 42' recessed in the container (see col. 6, line 62, to col. 7, line 8).

In any case, the reference teaches fixed halfshafts on the drive assembly; the half shafts are not detachable. It is not possible to remove the halfshafts together with the wheels.

It is not obvious to connect the halfshafts to the wheels and make the halfshafts

detachable because the concept of the mobilized container as presented in the cited reference resides in that the **wheels themselves are detachable from the shafts** in order to change the wheels according to the conditions of the surface on which the container will travel. Moreover, several sets of wheels provided in the mobilized container according to U.S. 6,502,656, if provided with half shafts that are detachable from the chassis as disclosed in the present invention, would present a problem in regard to storage in the cover.

The detachable halfshafts connected to the rear wheels enable a great wheel spacing. The halfshafts can have a relative great length since they are detachable and therefore do not protrude in the transport state of the caddie. The wide wheel spacing provides sufficient stability for the caddie. This is important when a heavy golf bag is placed on the carriage and the center of gravity is shifted upwardly. When traveling across uneven terrain, the great wheel spacing provided by the halfshaft/wheel arrangement according to the invention prevents tilting or tipping of the carriage and thus stabilizes the caddie. In the transport state, however, the wide wheel spacing provided by the rear wheels with their halfshafts does not present a problem since the wheels with the attached halfshafts are detachable from the chassis and are secured on top of the chassis so that the carriage has a compact size and minimal width determined by the chassis itself. Advantageously, the rear wheels are secured such that the halfshafts are received in receptacles on the chassis and the wheels rest on the chassis in the transport state. The diameter of the rear wheels is matched essentially to the width of the chassis. The half shafts on the wheels that are detachable from the chassis therefore provide great stability when driving the carriage and ensure a minimal size in the transport state.

The features of claim 2 are also not obvious in view of the cited reference. According to claim 2, the rear wheels have a diameter that is matched substantially to the width of the chassis and the chassis has a length that is approximately twice as long as the diameter of the rear wheels (see Fig. 2). Accordingly, the wheels have such a size that upon arrangement on the chassis they do not project past the chassis. The wheels do not have any effect on the size of the carriage in the transport state because the footprint of the carriage in the transport state is only determined by the size of the chassis beyond

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which the wheels do not project. Since the diameter of the wheels corresponds to the width of the chassis large wheels can be used. This increases stability of the carriage so that the carriage is well-suited for traveling on uneven ground.

Such a configuration is not disclosed in the U.S. 6,502,656. This reference shows several small wheels arranged in the cover. The wheels are so small that several sets of wheels for different ground surfaces can be arranged within the cover (Fig. 4). Instead of providing a single set of large rear wheels, the cited reference U.S. 6,502,656 suggests several sets of small wheels for different ground surfaces. The use of large wheels for increasing stability of the carriage is not suggested or taught by the cited reference.

Claim 3 refers to securing means for the halfshafts in the form of receptacles arranged on the chassis, wherein the halfshafts are insertable into the receptacles. This feature is also not disclosed in U.S. 6,502,656. The cited reference discloses receptacles intended for the wheels while claim 3 requires receptacles for the half shafts. Since the wheels in the transport state are secured by means of their half shafts, the receptacles can be simple and small. This is not disclosed in the cited reference.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims 1-4, 19-20 pursuant to 35 USC 103 are therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 7, 16, 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Weiss et al.* (US 6,502,656) in view of *Reimers et al.* (US 5,899,284).

The claims 6, 7, 16, and 17 are believed to be allowable as dependent claims of claim 1.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims 6, 7, 16, 17 pursuant to 35 USC 103 are therefore respectfully requested..

#### **ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER**

Claims 13-15 are allowed.

Claims 5, 8-12, 18, 21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates examiner's suggestion of allowability of these claims but is of the opinion that for the reasons presented above claim 1 in its current form clearly defines over the cited art.

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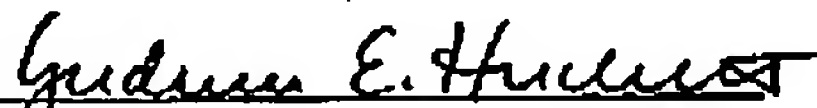
**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any further objections or suggestions, the undersigned would appreciate a phone call or e-mail from the examiner to discuss appropriate amendments to place the application into condition for allowance.

Authorization is herewith given to charge any fees or any shortages in any fees required during prosecution of this application and not paid by other means to Patent and Trademark Office deposit account 50-1199.

Respectfully submitted on October 14, 2005,

  
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